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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/552,000

10/04/2005

Hiroko Yanaga

1752-0173PUSI

6374

2292

7590

04/21/2006

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EXAMINER

GOUGH, TIFFANY MAUREEN

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1651

DATE MAILED: 04/21/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/552,000

Applicant(s)

YANAGA, HIROKO

Examiner

Tiffany M. Gough

Art Unit

1651

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☒ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 10/4/2005.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claim 1-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 1 recites a method of producing human chondrocytes comprising co-culturing chondrocytes obtained from cartilage having perichondrium together with the perichondrium. It is therefore confusing what the claims encompass. The claim is interpreted to state "...having perichondrium together with the chondrocytes."

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

Claims 1-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Hiroko et al (WO 02/012451 A1, see English language equivalent Hiroko et al, EP1331264A1).

Applicant claims a method of producing human chondrocytes, preferably auricular chondrocytes, from cartilage together with the perichondrium comprising growing cells either as a monolayer or multilayer seeding to give a chondrocyte mass.

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Applicant claims growing such cells alone or with an embedding material such as collagen, PLA, PGA, alginic acid, polyethylene oxide, fibrin adhesive, PLA-PGA copolymer, proteoglycan, glucosaminoglycan or human dermis.

Hiroko et al (WO 02/012451 A1, see equivalent EP1331264A1) disclose a method of co-culturing human chondrocytes together with perichondrial cells to produce large amounts of human chondrocytes in culture and further multilayer seeding to give to obtain a chondrocyte mass. Hiroko teaches utilization of a cartilage matrix containing collagen and a cartilage therapy material incorporating their chondrocyte mass. The therapy materials used may be collagen, PLA, PGA, alginates, polyethylene oxide, fibrin adhesive, PLA-PGA copolymer, proteoglycans, glucosaminoglycans or human dermis (see EP1331246A1 p.2 lines 35-p.3 up to lines 10). The human chondrocytes used in the invention may be any cartilage tissue such as auricular, costal, articular, intervertebral, or tracheal cartilage, especially auricular, costal and articular cartilage (see EP1331246A1 p.3 lines 18-20).

Double Patenting

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

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A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 1-6 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over the claims of copending Application No. 10/344135. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because although 10/344135 is claiming the pericondrial cells to be feeder cells, which is not specified in 10,552,000, applicant is still claiming the co-cultivation of human chondrocytes with perichondrial cells and multilayer seeding and culturing one or more times to obtain a mass which is integrated into a cartilage therapy material such as collagen, PLA, PGA, alginates, polyethylene oxide, fibrin adhesive, PLA-PGA copolymer, proteoglycans, glucosaminoglycans or human dermis. Moreover, the selection of cartilage from a known source, such as auricular, would have been considered obvious over the copending claims

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

Conclusion

No claims are found allowable over the prior art.


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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Tiffany M. Gough whose telephone number is 571-272-0697. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8-5 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mike Wityshyn can be reached on 571-272-0926. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

tmg



FRANCISCO PRATS
PRIMARY EXAMINER